

AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR § 1.116 – EXPEDITED PROCEDURE

Serial Number: 09/538,602

Filing Date: March 29, 2000

Title: USING THE ELECTRONIC PROGRAM GUIDE TO SYNCHRONIZE INTERACTIVITY WITH BROADCAST PROGRAMSPage 3
Dkt: 2050.032US1**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 25 further comprising: 1 wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, a timing offset object associated with a broadcast program comprises:

providing

timing information of a broadcast program, and
channel information of the broadcast program,
as inputs to the [[an]] electronic program guide, to determine the broadcast program; and
determining the [[a]] timing offsets offset object associated with the determined
broadcast program.

3. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 2 further comprising: 1 comprises:

providing

timing information of a broadcast program,
channel information of the broadcast program, and
location information of a [[the]] broadcaster of the broadcast program as the input
inputs to the [[an]] electronic program guide, to determine the broadcast program; and
determining a timing offset object associated with the determined broadcast program.

4. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 25 [[1]] further comprising an action to take with regards to the interactive application, wherein the action to take is one of starting, running for a duration, stopping, suspending, resuming, or triggering the interactive application or an element of the interactive application.

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5.-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 25 [[1]] wherein a URL is associated with the interactive application object is a URL, the method further comprising: and performing the action on the interactive application object further comprises: retrieving interactive content from a server on the Internet referenced by the URL; and performing an [[the]] action on the retrieved interactive content.

10-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier; and determining from the program identifier, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier; determining from the program identifier, a uniform resource locator (URL); and determining from the URL, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

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18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier;
determining from the program identifier, a URL;
determining from the URL, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and [[.]]
determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier;
determining from the program identifier, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and
determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a URL; and
determining from the URL, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

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21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a URL;

determining from the URL, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and

determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25 [[14]] wherein determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and

determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the [[an]] interactive application associated with the broadcast program.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program comprises:

receiving the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program from an external source.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 wherein the external source is a remote server, and receiving the timing offsets comprises:

accessing the remote server via a network connection; and
downloading the timing offsets.

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25. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method of controlling a broadcast and reception of an interactive application, comprising:

determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program;

controlling the interactive application to maintain synchrony with a [[the]] display of the broadcast program;

determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program; and where controlling the interactive application to maintain synchrony with the display of the broadcast program is done in accordance with the timing offsets,

wherein determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program comprises receiving the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program from an external source. The method of claim 23

wherein the external source is a remote server, and receiving the timing offsets comprises: receiving an email containing the timing offsets via network connection from the remote server.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23 wherein the external source is a national broadcaster that embeds the timing offsets in a [[the]] vertical blanking interval of the broadcast program.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program comprises:

determining from the interactive application, timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier; and determining from the program identifier, timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

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29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier;

determining from the program identifier, a URL; and

determining from the URL, the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier;

determining from the program identifier, a URL;

determining from the URL, an identifier of an interactive application associated with the program; and

determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a program identifier;

determining from the program identifier, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and

determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a URL; and

determining from the URL, the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

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33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, a URL;

determining from the URL, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and

determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining timing offsets associated with a broadcast program comprises:

determining from the [[an]] electronic program guide, an identifier of the [[an]] interactive application associated with the program; and

determining from the identifier of the interactive application, the timing offsets associated with the broadcast program.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]], wherein the broadcast program is a television show, and wherein controlling the interactive application further comprises:

responsive to determining from the timing offsets that an element of the interactive application is to be executed at a time relative to a [[the]] beginning of the television show, generating a command to execute an [[the]] element of the interactive application at a [[the]] given time.

36. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method of controlling a broadcast and reception of an interactive application, comprising:

determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program;

controlling the interactive application to maintain synchrony with a [[the]] display of the broadcast program;

determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program; and where

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controlling the interactive application to maintain synchrony with the display of the broadcast program is done in accordance with the timing offsets,
The method of claim 14 wherein the broadcast program is a television show, and wherein controlling the interactive application further comprises:

responsive to determining from the timing offsets that there is a break in the television

show, generating a command to suspend execution of the interactive application associated with the television show; and

responsive to determining from the timing offsets that the break in the television show has ended, generating a command to resume execution of the interactive application associated with the television show [[program]].

37. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method of controlling a broadcast and reception of an interactive application, comprising:

determining, using an electronic program guide, an interactive application associated with a broadcast program;

controlling the interactive application to maintain synchrony with a [[the]] display of the broadcast program;

determining timing offsets associated with the broadcast program; and where

controlling the interactive application to maintain synchrony with the display of the broadcast program is done in accordance with the timing offsets.

The method of claim 14 wherein the broadcast program is a first television show, and wherein controlling the interactive application further comprises:

responsive to determining from the timing offsets that there is a break in the first television show, generating a command to suspend execution of a first interactive application associated with the first television show;

responsive to determining from the timing offsets that the first television show is being broadcast after the break has ended, generating a command to restart execution of the first interactive application; and

responsive to determining from the timing offsets that a second television show is being broadcast, generating commands to terminate the first interactive application and to

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begin execution of a second interactive application associated with the second television show.

38. (Original) The method of any of claims 36-37, wherein the break is due to a commercial being broadcast.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]] wherein determining an interactive application using an electronic program guide comprises:

determining timing information of the broadcast program;

determining channel information of the broadcast program;

determining location information of a [[the]] broadcaster of the broadcast program; and determining, using the timing, channel, and location information as inputs to the [[an]] electronic program guide, the [[an]] interactive application.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]], wherein controlling the interactive application comprises comprises:

executing, from an interactive application server, commands from the timing offsets for selectively instructing a server to trigger events within interactive applications and to schedule, start [[star]], stop, and cancel interactive applications for the broadcast program associated with the timing offsets at corresponding times determined by the timing offsets.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]], wherein the electronic program guide resides at least primarily on a viewer's own consumer premise equipment.

42. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]], wherein the electronic program guide resides primarily on a server remote from a viewer's own consumer premise equipment.

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43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]], wherein the interactive application is run at least primarily on a viewer's own consumer premise equipment.

44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 [[14]], wherein the interactive application is run primarily on a server remote from a viewer's own consumer premise equipment.

45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 further comprising: A computer implemented method of controlling the reception of at least one interactive application, comprising:

determining, using the [[an]] electronic program guide, a list of interactive applications associated with the [[a]] broadcast program, the interactive applications being associated with at least one of the timing offsets offset;
pre-fetching the listed interactive applications;
storing the pre-fetched interactive applications;
receiving a trigger for one of the fetched applications; and
inserting one of the interactive applications into a [[the]] broadcast stream in response to the trigger and the at least one of the timing offsets offset.

46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36 further comprising: A computer implemented method of controlling the reception of at least one interactive application, comprising:

determining at a consumer premise equipment (CPE), using the [[an]] electronic program guide, a list of interactive applications associated with the [[a]] broadcast program;
pre-fetching the listed interactive applications and at least one of the timing offsets offset;
storing the pre-fetched interactive applications in a storage device coupled to the CPE;
receiving, at the CPE, a trigger for one of the fetched applications; and
displaying, at the CPE, one of the interactive applications in response to the trigger and the at least one of the timing offsets offset.

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47. (Original) The computer implemented method of either claim 45 or claim 46
wherein the trigger is received in the broadcast stream.